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● LAND CONSERVATION

Land conservancy groups across the state are vital to clean water efforts because they purchase and protect land bordering riparian areas. Another trend is conservation easements on land that borders rivers and streams; this practice gives landowners tax breaks in exchange for their promise to preserve and not develop certain parts of their land. To find out how to contribute or participate in a conservation easement program, contact the N.C. Conservation Tax Credit Program at (919) 715-4191, the DENR Division of Soil and Water Conservation at (919) 733-2302 (<http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC>), your local Soil and Water Conservation District or a land conservancy or trust in your area.

● ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Public education is critical for protecting rivers and streams. Through environmental education, you can learn more about the natural systems that support you. To encourage citizens to make informed environmental decisions, North Carolina offers many environmental education programs to the public through facilities from the mountains to the coast. These include parks, museums, Environmental Education Centers, aquariums, zoos and botanical gardens.

To learn about the wealth of programs and opportunities available, call the DENR Office of Environmental Education at (800) 482-8724, or visit the Web site at <http://www.eenorthcarolina.org>.